



# ESPRIT

Success Story

Innovative System Landscape for a Strong Brand Image –  
ESPRIT Sets the Course for Multi-Cloud Business  
Close to the Customer with SFB2C

CLIENT	Esprit Retail B.V. & Co. KG
INDUSTRY	Fashion Retail
PROJECT PERIOD	August 2019 – August 2020
TECHNOLOGY	Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud
FOCUS	E-Commerce

## About ESPRIT

»We want to make you feel good to look good.«

Fuelled by the vision of essential positivity, ESPRIT was founded by Susie and Doug Tompkins in California in 1968. Inspired by the revolutionary spirit of the 60s, the brand developed a clear philosophy: authenticity instead of unnatural perfectionism, cohesion instead of exclusion as well as colourful joie de vivre instead of grey everyday life. »We want to make you feel good to look good« became ESPRIT's guiding principle.

The secret behind the company's success? Since day one, ESPRIT has not only stood for casual, high-quality essentials and carefully selected trend pieces, but also for responsibility.

For ESPRIT, it is all about sustainability, equality and freedom of choice. What does this mean in concrete terms? In 1992, long before »eco fashion« became popular, ESPRIT already launched its first »ecollection« made of 100% organic cotton. For the »Real People Campaign« in the 1980s, the fashion company with Californian roots chose employees instead of models.

Today, ESPRIT is represented in 40 countries. ESPRIT's headquarters are located in Germany and Hong Kong. Since 1993, the brand has also been listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.



# The World's First Lifestyle Brand in Transition

ESPRIT RETAIL B.V. & Co. KG is already well-positioned digitally. The fashion company's website is based on a modern online set-up as well as established processes and functions. However, this is exactly where the company wants to start: it does not only want to keep the distance to other platforms and competitors small, but rather wants to set itself apart from the competition.

In the highly competitive fashion and lifestyle industry, this can only be accomplished by offering (potential) customers added value. To achieve this, however, the target group has to be tied to the brand more closely, addressed more personally and won over. With the change of CEO in 2018 and a reorientation towards a younger and clear brand image, ESPRIT has already successfully started the race to catch up with the dominant online players.

In order to be able to successfully implement the change with regard to systems and particularly in terms of sustainability, the company was now looking for a reliable partner and a solution that would be able to achieve everything the new, agile team had planned for the future in terms of technology. With dotSource as a Salesforce Gold Partner, ESPRIT found the right combination of consulting and development.

## Strong Systems and Partners for Ambitious Goals

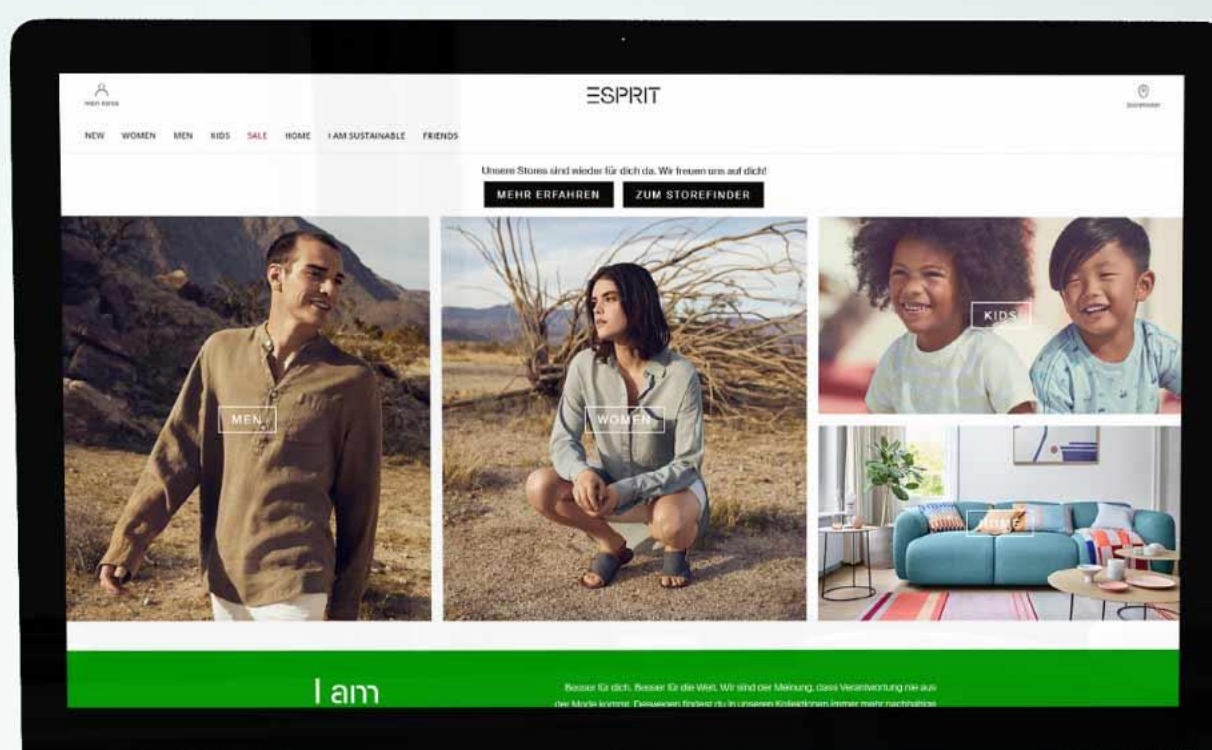
dotSource and Salesforce took part in a hackathon and were able to prevail against the competition. They proved that the Salesforce B2C Commerce solution is the right system to turn innovative ideas and a clear vision into successful practice.

Although it was not necessary to start from scratch on a digital level, an established commerce set-up also has its challenges. Despite the plan to replace the old system landscape with a more innovative and flexible one, the quality of the already developed status quo should (at least) be maintained.

By choosing Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud, ESPRIT was not only able to meet this requirement, but even managed to exceed it. As part of Salesforce's extensive multi-cloud portfolio, SF B2C CC is the perfect entry-level solution for everything that ESPRIT has set its sights on. Many internationally successful brands also rely on the modern solution from Salesforce.

Moreover, Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud is a solution that enables the fashion company to work independently on its online presence, develop it further and continuously optimise it while always keeping the focus on the customer.

The old system made it impossible for ESPRIT to be agile, flexible and responsive. An external service provider was in charge, which increasingly led to a loss of information and knowledge, lack of control and less strategic options within the company. By choosing dotSource and Salesforce, ESPRIT wants to change this. With Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud, ESPRIT has found a solution that allows the company to remain capable of acting on its own.



# Innovative System Landscape for International Customers

Furthermore, internationalisation also played an important role. ESPRIT's various country-specific online shops all have different features and are therefore unique to each country. Just like their customers, they have to be looked at and (re)designed separately and carefully.

The systemic transition from the old system to Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud and other systems in the restructured system landscape thus went hand in hand with many organisational and process changes. As part of the project, all these parallel lines of action and tasks were to be taken into account and shaped.

Following ESPRIT's request to take advantage of the established digital status quo in order to become more innovative and independent with a new, modern and strong solution, one of the largest B2C projects in Europe was carried out in a completely agile way.

The pitch won during the hackathon, where an ESPRIT »committee« thoroughly tested the technologies presented, was followed by a kick-off meeting with Salesforce in Ratingen, the German headquarters of ESPRIT, at the end of August 2019.

*»Agile, flexible, innovative: this is how everyone who wants to be a player in e-commerce describes themselves today. We have experienced what it really means to think, develop and act in an agile and flexible way. For our customers. Without a doubt, this requires the right technology. However, you also need the right team – the perfect mix of know-how, innovative spirit and trust. We are extremely delighted to have found all of this with dotSource and Salesforce and are looking forward to everything that lies ahead.«*

Nam Hoang Dong,

Senior Vice President - Head of Digital

Robert Schmidt,

Head of Commerce Technology B2C

## A/B Testing as a Success Factor

With ESPRIT as product owner and stakeholder as well as dotSource and Salesforce as the development and consulting team, it was possible to identify and implement the requirements through step-by-step software development according to Scrum and by using Atlassian tools. In smaller countries, the websites were launched first, and the rollouts were also carried out carefully and gradually. The old system continued to run in parallel and increasing amounts of traffic were gradually redirected from the old to the new shops.

This controlled, step-by-step approach using A/B testing not only enabled the project team to constantly test whether the plans are technologically feasible and accepted by customers, but also to remain flexible and to be able to react to spontaneous situations quickly, independently and with little risk.

It all started with the rollout of ESPRIT UK. Initially, a small MVP with rudimentary features was planned. The final result was the implementation of ESPRIT's requirement to map the current set-up of the UK system and to connect all relevant third-party systems such as ERP, OMS, PIM, CRM, marketing and CMS as well as tracking functions.

The launch was successfully completed in January 2020 after a series of automatic and manual tests. In June, ESPRIT AT was successfully launched. Since then, the project team has been working on the continuous optimisation of the platform and the rollout of ESPRIT Germany in summer/autumn 2020, which will mark the successful launch of the biggest and most important market for ESPRIT.

In particular the close and excellent cooperation within the entire project team was one of the factors that contributed to the successful migration and the launches that followed.







## Conclusion

In order to keep pace and stand out from the competition, innovative ideas, efficient processes, high pace of adaptation and a brand image with recognition value as well as the necessary system requirements are absolutely crucial.

By migrating to Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud, ESPRIT sets the course for future-proof business in the fashion and lifestyle industry – everything close to the customer.

SF B2C as a strong technological foundation for competitive commerce as well as the wide range of features Salesforce offers as a platform provider allow the fashion company to further expand its digital maturity and to invest in successful customer relationship management – in an independent, flexible and agile manner.

# About Us

dotSource, that's over 300 digital natives with one mission: designing digital customer relations. Our work rises from the connection of humankind, space, and technology.

We've been supporting businesses in their digital transformations since 2006. Whether e-commerce and content platforms, customer relationship and product data management, or digital marketing and artificial intelligence: our solutions are user-oriented, emotional, targeted, and intelligent.

We see ourselves as a partner of our clients, whose special requirements and needs flow into the project straight from the first idea. From strategy consultation and system selection, to branding, concept creation, UX design and conversion optimisation to operation in the cloud – together we develop and implement scalable digital products. Our approach relies on new work and agile methodologies such as scrum and design thinking.

Companies like Esprit, EMP, BayWa, Axel Springer, hagebau, C.H.Beck, Würth and STABLO trust in our competence.

With our blog Handelskraft.com, annual Trend Book, and Handelskraft Conference, we network industry knowledge and provide insight into current opportunities and developments of digital brand management. In order to comprehensively prepare professionals and executives for the entrepreneurial challenges of the digital world, we launched Digital Business School together with Steinbeis Technology Group in 2015.

With our groundbreaking solutions, we have been able to establish ourselves as one of the leading digital agencies in German-speaking Europe and are now among the top 10 largest companies in the industry.

# DIGITAL SUCCESS RIGHT FROM THE START.

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